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Jul 22, 2021 - World

Congress, Europeans trash pipeline deal



Dave Lawler



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and German Chancellor Angela Merkel.
Photo: Stefanie Loos/Pool/Getty Images

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Republicans like Sen. Ted Cruz expressed outrage and Democrats like Sen. Tim Kaine voiced concern. In Europe, the Ukrainians feel bullied and the Poles disappointed.

The big picture: Ukraine and U.S. allies on the eastern flank of NATO argue the pipeline will make it easier for Moscow to isolate Kyiv and pressure Europe. They say the U.S.-Germany deal doesn't sufficiently address those concerns.

- For Russia and Germany, though, the deal is confirmation a natural gas pipeline the Biden White House has called "a Kremlin geopolitical project that threatens European energy security" will be completed.

Driving the news: The Biden administration argued Wednesday it was Donald Trump who missed a chance to stop the pipeline by implementing sanctions sooner.

- Officials say they secured the best deal they could from Germany on a pipeline 90% complete when they took office.
- Germany pledged to "take action at the national level and press for effective measures at the European level, including sanctions," if Russia tries to "use energy as a weapon" or cuts off gas to its neighbor.
- That would now be much simpler as Nord Stream 2 circumvents Ukraine, unlike existing pipelines

emphasize that Ukraine had been consulted throughout the process. But an adviser to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky tells Axios the steps announced Wednesday fall well short of their expectations and utterly fail to address Ukraine's security concerns.

- Ukraine and Poland also released a joint statement saying the steps were "not sufficient."
- Asked by Axios about the Ukrainian objections, a senior administration official insisted the deal would reduce the risk to Ukraine and would hopefully "enable us to move forward with conversations in a number of other areas, including on security, rather than only talking about Nord Stream 2."

Behind the scenes: While members of the Biden administration were finalizing their deal with Germany, they were working with the Ukrainians to set a date for Zelensky's White House visit, which the Ukrainian president had initially stated would be this month.

- The Ukrainians felt the administration was effectively linking the White House visit to Ukraine's position on the Nord Stream deal and pressuring them not to speak out. A senior administration official denied that in a statement to Axios.
- But the visit is now set for Aug. 30, at which point Congress will be out of session and Zelensky will have a much harder time rallying opposition in D.C.

after the Ukrainian president [criticized Biden's approach to Nord Stream 2 in an interview with Axios](#) and pleaded for a meeting before the June Biden-Putin summit.

The latest: The White House probably could have done without this [headline out of Moscow](#) on Wednesday night: "Putin, Merkel express satisfaction with prompt completion of Nord Stream 2 construction in phone call."



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Dave Lawler, Zachary Basu

Jul 21, 2021 - World

Ukraine fears U.S.-Germany deal on Putin's pipeline falls far short

Zelensky and Merkel. Photo: Stefanie Loos-Pool/Getty Images

The soon-to-be-announced deal between the U.S. and Germany on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline falls well short of Ukraine's hopes and fails to address the country's national security concerns, an adviser to

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Why it matters: The deal is designed to allay concerns in Kyiv and on Capitol Hill about the imminent completion of the Russia-to-Germany gas pipeline, which the Biden administration itself has condemned as "a Kremlin geopolitical project that threatens European energy security."

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Axios

Jul 20, 2021 - Politics & Policy

DHS announces new cybersecurity regulations for pipelines

Colonial Pipeline fuel tanks in Woodbine, Maryland, in May 2021. Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

The Department of Homeland Security on Tuesday [announced](#) new security regulations for pipeline operators in an effort to bolster their defenses against cyberattacks.

Why it matters: The latest order comes in response to the ransomware operation against [Colonial Pipeline](#) in May, which crippled the United States' fuel supply and set off gas shortages across several states.

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